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Official Records

First Committee
22nd meeting
Wednesday, 25 October 2000, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: U Mya Than ..... (Myanmar)

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Agenda items 65 to 81

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: As I mentioned on Monday, 23 October 2000, this afternoon the Committee will proceed to take action on draft resolutions that appear in informal working paper No. 1 in the following sequence: cluster 1, nuclear weapons, draft resolutions A/C.1/55/L.7, A/C.1/55/L.8, A/C.1/55/L.36, A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1 and A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1. In addition, if there is no objection, the Committee will take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East". I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The Chairman: In cluster 2, other weapons of mass destruction, we will take action on draft resolutions A/C.1/55/L.18 and A/C.1/55/L.20; and in cluster 4, conventional weapons, draft resolutions A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1 and A/C.1/55/L.50.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16 is not yet ready to be taken up at this meeting so we will have to wait until delegations indicate their readiness to take action on it.

Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolutions I should like once again to review the procedure I outlined on Monday for this phase of the Committee's work. At the outset of each meeting, delegations will have an opportunity to introduce revised draft resolutions. I will then call upon those delegations wishing to make general statements or comments, other than in explanation of their position or vote, on the draft resolutions in a particular cluster.

Thereafter, delegations may proceed to explain their position or vote on the draft resolutions before a decision is taken.

After the Committee has taken a decision on a draft resolution, I will call upon those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote on the draft resolution on which a decision has just been taken.

Therefore, delegations will have two opportunities to explain votes or positions on a particular draft resolution: before and after a vote is taken. In accordance with the rules of procedure, sponsors of draft resolutions are not permitted to make statements in explanation of vote. They can make only general statements or comments on draft resolutions in particular clusters at the beginning of a meeting.

In order to avoid misunderstanding, I would again urge those delegations wishing to request a recorded vote on a particular draft resolution kindly to inform the Secretariat of their intention before the Committee begins its action on any individual cluster.

With regard to any deferment of action on any draft resolution, delegations should inform the Secretariat in advance. Every effort should be made, to

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the extent possible, however, to refrain from resorting to a deferment of action on any draft resolution.

I hope these procedures are clear to all members of the Committee.

I call first on those delegations wishing to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Du Preez (South Africa): I wish first to introduce a technical proposal to draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.20, entitled "Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol", which will be considered under cluster 2.

Since South Africa introduced this draft resolution in its capacity as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), it has been brought to our attention that another State party to the Geneva Protocol withdrew its reservation in May this year. That information is contained in document A/55/115/Add.1. So as to give appropriate recognition to this important step, it is proposed that the word "one" in operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.20 be replaced by the word "two" and that the plural form of the word "State" be used. Operative 2, as amended, will then read:

> "*Notes with appreciation* the recent withdrawal of reservations by two States parties to the Geneva Protocol".

On behalf of the sponsors I again request that the draft resolution be adopted with maximum support.

I also wish to introduce a revised version of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38, entitled "Illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons", circulated as A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1. That draft resolution will be considered under cluster 4.

So as to make it clear about what the Secretary-General is requested to consult on with regard to the role of the United Nations, the sponsors agree to revise the last part of operative paragraph 1 and to use the same language adopted without a vote at the fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions. That language reads as follows:

> "and the role of the United Nations in collecting, collating, sharing and disseminating information on illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons".

The sponsors agreed to make this change and hope that with this minor change the draft resolution can again be adopted without a vote as was the case, with resolutions at previous sessions.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1. Having consulted interested delegations after the first version of the draft resolution was circulated and introduced in the Committee, the following three changes have made.

In the sixth preambular paragraph there has been a request to clarify that the resolution mentioned is General Assembly resolution 53/77 D. The draft paragraph would thus read as follows:

> "*Welcoming* the measures taken to implement resolution 53/77 D at the national and international levels".

The second change concerns the seventh preambular paragraph. In it we clarify that the reference made in the present draft resolution is to the Final Document of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to paragraph 8 of the section concerning article VII of the Treaty. The revised preambular paragraph would thus read as follows:

> "*Recalling* that in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was held at United Nations Headquarters from 24 April to 19 May 2000, the Conference welcomed, in paragraph 8 of the section concerning article VII of the Treaty, the declaration by Mongolia of its nuclear-weapon-free status and took note of the adoption by the Mongolian parliament of legislation defining and regulating that status".

The third change concerns operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40. It has been suggested that reference to the Security Council should be made in the preambular part of the draft resolution rather than in its operative part. As to the wording, it was agreed that the new preambular paragraph, now the tenth preambular paragraph, would read as follows:

> "*Taking note also* of the fact that the joint statement has been transmitted to the Security Council by the five nuclear-weapon States".

With this addition, operative paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40 is deleted. My delegation will refrain from commenting on the substance of this revision, which is self-explanatory. The revised draft resolution will thus have nine operative paragraphs rather than 10.

In conclusion, I should like to express once again my delegation's appreciation of the spirit of goodwill, understanding and cooperation that it found in the course of consultations on the drafting of the resolution. We believe that the draft resolution is non-controversial, constructive and forward-looking. Its adoption and implementation would allow Mongolia to contribute to the objectives of non-proliferation, greater predictability and stability in our region. Therefore, my delegation expresses the hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The Chairman: I now call on delegations wishing to make general statements or comments on draft resolutions contained in cluster 1, nuclear weapons.

Mr. Soutar (United Kingdom): I have asked for the floor briefly to outline the general approach of the United Kingdom to our consideration of the draft resolutions contained in cluster 1, on nuclear disarmament.

When introducing the first of the draft resolutions on which you, Mr. Chairman, propose to ask the Committee to take action today, namely, A/C.1/55/L.7, entitled "2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", the representative of Algeria referred to the remarkable achievements of that Conference. I quote:

> "The balanced review of the implementation of the Treaty's provisions since the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995 and the agreement on realistic and practical steps to further advance the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to strengthen cooperation in the peaceful application of nuclear energy, as well as the agreement on improving the effectiveness of the strengthened review process for the Treaty, are, indeed, remarkable achievements." (*A/C.1/55/PV.15, p. 3*)

These are indeed remarkable achievements, and I should like to pay tribute here to the outstanding personal contribution that Ambassador Baali made to that outcome.

The Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference sets out, in a balanced way, a number of practical steps for the achievement of the global elimination of nuclear weapons. The United Kingdom stands by all of these undertakings. We also believe that it is right that the General Assembly should welcome the outcome of the Conference, as proposed in draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7.

A number of other draft resolutions have been placed before the Committee which, it is claimed by their authors, seek to reflect the outcome of the Conference by incorporating language from the Final Document to update resolutions from earlier years. While respecting the intentions of the authors of such draft resolutions, I must sound a note of caution. Those of us here present who were also present at the Review Conference recall only too vividly that the Final Document emerged as the product of laboriously achieved compromise. Those compromises risk being undermined if the language of the Final Document is quoted from selectively or is subjected to interpretations which its authors had not agreed in the course of the Review Conference itself. For that reason, the United Kingdom will determine its position on the other nuclear disarmament draft resolutions before the Committee after an assessment of how faithfully they reflect the letter and the spirit of the Final Document.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation has asked for the floor to make a general statement under this cluster, the aim being once again to place on record where we stand on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We deemed it appropriate to make this general statement to avoid to the extent possible the need to offer repeated explanations of vote when the Committee takes decisions on the draft resolutions and separate paragraphs included in this cluster that refer in one way or another to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. However, we reserve the right to make additional explanations on specific votes when specific draft resolutions or paragraphs referring to the NPT come up, if we deem it appropriate to do so.

The provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty are essentially discriminatory and selective because they legitimize the possession of nuclear weapons by a

select club of countries. The nuclear Powers legitimized by the NPT are not even obliged to submit their installations and nuclear arsenals to international safeguards. Neither is there any prohibition on the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, which makes it possible for the nuclear Powers recognized as such in the Treaty to constantly develop them qualitatively. Those are the reasons why thus far Cuba has not signed or ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Our country will continue, in a totally transparent way, to develop its nuclear programme for peaceful purposes and will keep working tirelessly for nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Though it is not a party to the NPT, all of Cuba's nuclear installations are now under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards arrangements, with which we are strictly abiding. Cuba's decision to participate as an observer at the sixth Review Conference of the NPT once again demonstrated the interest and serious-mindedness with which our country has been following all issues involving disarmament and non-proliferation.

We have taken due note of the outcome of the sixth Conference and hope and expect that the nuclear-weapon States will live up to the specific commitments they have assumed thereunder. Some States — fortunately, the minority — have expressed a great deal of optimism about the results of the sixth Review Conference. Cuba fully respects the right of each country to make its own evaluations. As we see it, there are no grounds for complacency when we see the continued absence of deadlines to get rid of the remaining 35,000 nuclear weapons that today threaten us all.

For these reasons, Cuba will not vote in favour of specific draft resolutions and separate paragraphs in this cluster that refer to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and do not accord with our positions.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): I take the floor to speak in support of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7, entitled "2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". I congratulate Algerian Ambassador Baali on his highly skilful presidency and leadership of the memorably successful Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference, which this spring, here in this house, produced a landmark consensus declaration, an unprecedented, unequivocal undertaking, and an impressive programme of multilateral, bilateral and nuclear-weapon State work towards the fulfilment of this vital Treaty. Widespread scepticism was confounded, the 1995 promise of permanence with accountability was kept, and new hope was born.

I recognize that some States here are not parties to the NPT. I nonetheless believe that the Treaty serves their interests as well, for it serves global security interests we all share. I urge them to recognize this common ground and to join us all, every one, in its defence.

Mr. Eslamizad (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have asked for the floor to make some very brief comments on the draft resolution entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", document A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a matter of principle, supports and encourages the initiation of practical measures towards the universal eradication of nuclear weapons. In this context, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an effective measure to realize such goals. The draft resolutions submitted by Mongolia since 1998 on recognizing and according to that country the status of a country free from nuclear weapons, in our view, is an initiative that deserves support. These draft resolutions, fortunately, have received broad support from the international community. We note with satisfaction that following the adoption of such resolutions efforts were made to implement them. The draft resolution again this year is a reiteration of the principled position adopted by the General Assembly to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, and we are confident that the implementation of this draft resolution would also prepare the ground for strengthening security and stability in the region.

The Chairman: I call now on those delegations wishing to explain their vote or position on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7 before a decision is taken.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): My delegation would like to say a few words in explanation of our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7, on the results of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We have already expressed the view that the sense of optimism that we have witnessed in the Committee during the present session is perhaps due in large measure to the

consensus achieved at the NPT Review Conference. We have also felicitated the President of the Conference, Ambassador Baali of Algeria, and others involved, for their admirable efforts to achieve this consensus, although perhaps if certain other States had been present at the Conference the nature of that consensus may have been somewhat different.

Pakistan also had an opportunity on 23 October — that is, last week — to express its views on some of the provisions of the NPT Conference's consensus that are inconsistent with Pakistan's national security interests and policies and are thus unacceptable to it. I will not belabour the point by repeating those considerations, which are already in the record. For that reason, Pakistan cannot agree to the provision in draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7 which welcomes the results of the NPT Conference. My delegation will therefore be obliged to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

The Chairman: If no other delegation wishes to speak, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7, entitled "2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", was introduced by the representative of Algeria at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 16 October 2000.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Cape Verde, India

Abstaining:

Cuba, Israel, Pakistan

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7 was adopted by 141 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.

[*Subsequently, the delegations of Cape Verde and Haiti informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.*]

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Mukul (India): My delegation has requested the floor to explain its position after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.7, entitled "2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". My delegation's views on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are well known. The NPT remains both discriminatory and ineffective. It seeks to perpetuate a discriminatory non-proliferation regime while turning a blind eye to reality. Further, the NPT has also proved to be inadequate and ineffective. The

proliferation of nuclear weapons and delivery systems has continued unabated, while article VI remains unimplemented. In fact, the NPT nuclear-weapon States have either been active collaborators in, or silent spectators to, continuing proliferation, including exports of nuclear-weapon-related components and technologies.

The draft resolution seeks to welcome the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which makes a number of completely unacceptable and totally unwarranted references to my country, a non-party to the discriminatory NPT. My delegation rejects those references unequivocally in their entirety. Moreover, the optimism, even euphoria, witnessed in some quarters at the very outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference has proved to be short-lived and hollow. With no progress on the ground, as witnessed in the Conference on Disarmament, where all attempts at even commencing any substantive and meaningful negotiations on nuclear disarmament have proved futile, my delegation obviously cannot be a party to this and has therefore cast a negative vote on the draft resolution.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): My delegation wishes to take the floor in explanation of its vote after the voting on the draft resolution entitled "2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", document A/C.1/55/L.7. At a time when the nuclear-disarmament agenda needs to be pursued with all seriousness, the adoption of the draft resolution entitled "2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" by a majority of member States only vindicates the position of my delegation which has accorded the highest priority to the issue of nuclear disarmament. May I recall that our representative, while speaking during the general debate in the Committee, also emphasized the importance my delegation has been giving to this issue. The outcome of the Review Conference, especially the unequivocal commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their nuclear arsenals, deserves to be welcomed. We only hope that this commitment made in good faith during the Review Conference of the NPT will be translated into action sooner rather than later, as a large majority of the members of this Committee place such emphasis on this particular achievement of the Review Conference.

The Chairman: If no delegations wish to explain their vote or position before a decision is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.8, the Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.8.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.8, entitled "Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)", was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the Committee's 17th meeting, on 18 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.8 are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.8 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.8 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 20 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh,

Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36 was adopted by 97 votes to none, with 50 abstentions.

[*Subsequently, the delegation of Haiti informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.*]

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Suh Dae-won (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to explain its abstention in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36. We agreed to the need for negative security assurances at the sixth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In our view, the primary issue here centres on to whom and in what form security assurances will be given. My delegation has upheld the principle that non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT that fully comply with its provisions, in particular those contained in articles II and III of the NPT, have a legitimate right to receive assurances from nuclear-weapon States that the latter will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the former. Likewise, nuclear-weapon States have a corresponding obligation to provide such assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, but only to those in compliance with the NPT provisions. These mutual responsibilities, conditional for all States parties to the NPT, will doubtless contribute to strengthening the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

On the issue of form, my delegation has considered the options expressed by those in favour of a single international instrument and those in favour of bilateral, regional or other approaches. While the Republic of Korea sees the need to address this issue more closely, it holds the position that if principles that address these aforementioned mutual responsibilities are firmly established, it could be flexible on the issue of form. As we do not feel that this draft resolution adequately reflects these concerns, my delegation abstained in the voting.

Mr. Mukul (India): My delegation wishes to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".

India has consistently maintained that the only credible guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons lies in their total elimination. Until this objective is achieved, as an interim measure and as one that complements other measures to reduce nuclear dangers, including de-alerting, we believe that there exists an obligation on the part of States possessing nuclear weapons to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use of such weapons. This obligation should be of an internationally binding character, clear, credible, universal and without discrimination.

No delegation is opposed to the establishment of an ad hoc committee on negative security assurances in the Conference on Disarmament. Such an ad hoc committee would be an essential element in any programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament next year that reflects the priorities and interests of all delegations.

For its part, and conscious of its responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State, India has stated that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against nuclear-weapon States and that it remains willing to strengthen this undertaking by entering into arrangements on "no first use", or multilateral negotiations on global "no first use".

With our having stated that we will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, there remains no basis for their use against countries which do not have nuclear weapons. India respects the choice exercised by non-nuclear-weapon States in establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned and remains willing to convert this commitment into a legal obligation.

Mr. Luck (Australia): I have asked for the floor to provide an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36. Australia considers that pending the elimination of nuclear weapons, consistent with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), negative security assurances are an essential reinforcing element underpinning the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Australia considers that those countries that are non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, that have renounced the nuclear-weapons option and that are in full compliance with their NPT obligations have a legitimate claim to credible, comprehensive and effective negative security assurances from the five nuclear-weapon States. Negative security assurances are also an important inducement for the few States still outside the NPT to accede to the Treaty, and Australia continues to hold the view that only States willing to assure the security of others by becoming parties to the NPT should benefit from negative security assurances.

Regrettably, the failure of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.36 to give due primacy to the particular claims and interests of States parties to the NPT in this regard prevented Australia from supporting the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1. If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", was introduced by the representative of Mongolia at the Committee's 18th meeting, on 19 October 2000.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. King (United States of America): The United States is pleased that draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", has been adopted without a vote. We would simply like to note that the United States will continue to cooperate in the implementation of this draft resolution, as it did for its predecessor resolution, 53/77 D. We would also hope that other United Nations Members, and the appropriate United Nations bodies, would continue to lend their cooperation and support, as necessary, in this same endeavour.

Mr. Mukul (India): My delegation has joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.40/Rev.1, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", introduced by Mongolia and adopted without a vote.

Mongolia, a country with which India has extremely close and friendly relations, enjoys a special and unique position, resulting in its quest for nuclear-weapon-free status. In the pursuit of that objective,

Mongolia has taken a number of concrete measures, including the adoption of national domestic legislation. We acknowledge with appreciation and convey support for Mongolia's statement, dated 6 October 2000, reaffirming its readiness to cooperate with all Member States of the United Nations and relevant United Nations bodies in enhancing the effectiveness and strengthening the credibility of its nuclear-weapon-free status. India fully respects the choice made by Mongolia and extends its cooperation, support and commitment to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. We believe that in order to be effective and credible, security assurances should be unambiguous and internationally binding. We therefore also call upon all the Member States of the United Nations, particularly those that possess nuclear weapons, to respond positively for the full realization and strengthening of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1.

If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia", was introduced by the representative of Uzbekistan at the Committee's 20th meeting, on 20 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1 are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Mukul (India): My delegation has joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia", which has just been adopted without a vote. It is noteworthy that the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia is supported by all the States of the region, in conformity with the requirement of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.

We are particularly pleased that the efforts of the Central Asian States, with which India historically enjoys close and friendly ties, are getting the international support that the initiative deserves. India fully respects the choice made by the Central Asian States and is prepared to extend all possible support and commitment in response to the expressed need for the early realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): My delegation expresses its happiness at the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.45/Rev.1, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia", for the reason that the establishment of such nuclear-weapon-free zones is an effective confidence-building measure.

The Chairman: We now come to cluster 2. If no delegations wish to make general statements on draft resolutions contained in cluster 2, other weapons of mass destruction, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18. I call first on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt wishes to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18 before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Egypt has traditionally supported all measures leading to the promotion of international and regional stability and has always committed itself to engage in constructive action in the fulfilment of that obligation. It is in that spirit that we cannot but sympathize with the general thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18, as it addresses a good instrument which aims at prohibiting a whole category of weapons of mass destruction, namely, chemical weapons, thus giving the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) effective impact in the field of disarmament, as opposed to non-proliferation.

Nevertheless, Egypt would like to stress once again its well-known position vis-à-vis the Convention

and its implications in the Middle East region. Our commitment, explained vividly, to the prohibition of chemical weapons and all weapons of mass destruction is best exemplified by President Mubarak's 1990 initiative on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction, underscoring the following elements: first, a total prohibition in the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction without exception, be they nuclear, chemical or biological; and, secondly, that all States in the region should make a solemn declaration, without exception, of reciprocal commitment and obligation in this regard.

That prompted the Security Council to support our initiative, as mentioned in its resolution 687 (1991) and in the Security Council statement of 1992. In July 1991 Foreign Minister Amre Moussa, in his letter addressed to the Secretary-General, explained that priority must be given to freeing the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction and to increasing the security of the States of the region with a lower level of armament, as well as to the realization of equal and reciprocal security for all States in the region, not through a qualitative edge, nor through military superiority, but through dialogue, negotiations and a deep commitment to peace, equality and security for all.

Although Egypt participated actively in the long and arduous negotiations which took place in the Conference on Disarmament and which led to the elaboration of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, its position has been voiced since day one, at the time of the Convention's opening for signature in January 1993 at the Paris Conference. Indeed, our position emanates from and is firmly based on our regional considerations and concerns. For a long time now, Israel has been repeatedly stating on different occasions and in various forums that the application of this Convention should include all States in the Middle East region within a mutually accepted verification mechanism. In all frankness, I have to admit that, for once, we are not at odds with what Israel here seems to advocate or state as its aspirations. The Government of Egypt shares that view. However, it is the wider spectrum that is important, not limited only to chemical weapons or to biological weapons, but including both together, along with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to which all States of the Middle East are parties with the exception of Israel, which continues to refuse to join the Treaty or to place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) full-scope safeguards.

Despite all these considerations, my delegation did not request a recorded vote on this draft resolution. However, we do not consider ourselves to be part of any consensus decision that will be taken on this draft resolution today and would like to register our reservation on the content and letter of the operative paragraphs in the draft.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", was introduced by the representative of Poland at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 16 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18 are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18 was adopted.

The Chairman: I call now on those delegations wishing to explain their positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Bar (Israel): Israel once again joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.18, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction". Israel signed the Convention and participated actively in the Preparatory Commission in order to shape the Convention into a workable mechanism. By signing the Convention Israel reflected its moral vision and commitment to a world free of chemical weapons. We reaffirm that commitment. On signing the Convention in January 1993, Israel expressed its hope that other countries in the region would soon follow suit. Among those are countries that are known for their use of

chemical weapons in the past and are believed to continuously strive to improve their chemical capabilities. Unfortunately, none of those countries has either signed or ratified the Convention, or expressed any intention to do so. Therefore, Israel believes that the issue of chemical disarmament, as well as the issue of other weapons of mass destruction, should be dealt with within the regional context.

The reason Israel has not yet ratified the Convention relates to Israel's unique geopolitical environment. At the signing ceremony of the CWC in 1993, Israel made it clear that it would seek to ratify the Convention subject, inter alia, to regional security concerns. These considerations remain no less valid today, as these concerns have not diminished but have only increased.

The fact that Israel joined the consensus on this draft resolution must not be construed as prejudging the outcome of Israel's decision on the ratification of the CWC. Once again Israel reaffirms its view that positive changes in the security climate in the Middle East will be a major consideration for Israel regarding the ratification issue.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.20. If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.20.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.20, entitled "Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol", was introduced by the representative of South Africa at the Committee's 18th meeting, on 19 October 2000, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. This draft resolution has been orally revised by the representative of South Africa. In operative paragraph 2 the words "one State party" are replaced by the words "two States parties". Accordingly, at the end of the footnote at the bottom of the page, the words "and addendum 1" are added.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), Republic of Korea, United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.20, as orally revised, was adopted by 144 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Eslamizad (Islamic Republic of Iran): The strong support of this body for the adoption of this draft resolution is the manifestation of the will of the international community to strengthen the ban against the use of biological and chemical weapons. The 1925 Geneva Protocol is an important and essential instrument which has contributed to the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. However, some States parties to this Protocol, out of security considerations, made reservations to the Protocol, which opens up the possibility that those States could use such weapons if they were to be attacked with chemical and biological weapons. But the international situation is changing. After many years of negotiations the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) was concluded in 1972, banning the use of such weapons under any circumstances. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which was also the product of more than 25 years of negotiations, also prohibits the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances. That means that under existing legal instruments the use of chemical and biological weapons is banned even in cases of reciprocity. The international community today cannot afford to observe that those weapons could be used under any circumstance or justification.

This situation makes obsolete the reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and not commensurate with the trend of the disarmament process to strengthen such a ban on the use of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. The General Assembly resolution asking for the waiving of reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, therefore, is both timely and relevant. We are encouraged to see that the resolution is now widely and increasingly supported. We are particularly grateful to the Governments of Canada, and, very recently, Estonia, which have removed their reservations to the Protocol in order to strengthen and uphold its provisions. My delegation is also grateful to all other countries that have supported this draft resolution, and we hope that in the near future, with the promotion of our common understanding, the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote. Our positive optimism is, of course, based on the records that show that votes other than positive votes have been decreasing since 1996.

The Chairman: We now come to cluster 4, conventional weapons. I call on delegations wishing to make general statements on draft resolutions contained in cluster 4.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): I should like to make some general remarks on cluster 4.

As a country that has been devastated by the use, including the indiscriminate use, of small arms and light weapons, and a country in which these weapons continue to pose a serious threat to peace and security — not only to Sierra Leone but also to the West African subregion — my delegation attaches great importance to the issues contained in the draft resolutions under cluster 4, namely, conventional weapons.

Sierra Leone does not manufacture these weapons and is not in a position to stop the flow of these weapons into its own territory or into the West African subregion. At the same time, Sierra Leone does not use, and has never used, its territory as a conduit for the illicit flow of these arms. Therefore, we can only rely on the efforts of the United Nations and the international community as a whole to take effective action to curb the illicit trafficking in small arms.

We, for our part, have scrupulously observed the provisions of the regional mechanism in our area, namely the Economic Community of West African States moratorium for controlling the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms. It is our hope that other States will respect the existing arms control mechanisms or regimes, especially those established by the Security Council, pertaining to the West African subregion.

More importantly, we hope that support for the draft resolutions now before the Committee under cluster 4, conventional weapons, will provide an incentive — indeed, a new momentum — in the pursuit of peace, stability and good-neighbourliness in all those areas where small arms pose a threat, including our own area, the West African region. We also hope that it will also provide an incentive for support for disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation programmes not only in Sierra Leone but also in other areas of our African continent.

Finally, my delegation looks forward to the outcome of the 2001 United Nations Conference on the

Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The Chairman: If no other delegation wishes to make a general statement on draft resolutions in cluster 4, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1.

If no delegations wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1, entitled "Illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons", was introduced by the representative of South Africa at the Committee's 16th meeting, on 17 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Slovakia and Liechtenstein.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.38/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, we shall proceed to the next draft resolution. I have just been informed by the Secretary that draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.44 is not ready for action because the report on the programme budget implications is needed. That draft resolution will be taken up later.

We will now, therefore, proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.50. If no representatives wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken, the Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.50.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.50, entitled "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects", was introduced by the representative of Sweden at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 20 October 2000. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.50 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/55/INF.2. In addition, Togo has also become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.50 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.50 was adopted.

The Chairman: If no representatives wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted, we have completed consideration of and action on draft resolutions contained in informal working paper No.1.

I now call on the Secretary of the Committee to explain informal working paper No. 2/Rev.1.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): For tomorrow's programme and action, informal working paper No. 2/Rev.1 has already been distributed. However, in cluster 1, nuclear weapons, there is a mistake in the title of draft resolution A/C.1/55/L.16. The title should be "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East".

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.